

Population: Advanced students of English.

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will be able to recognize and use adjectival suffixes to make adjectives out of nouns.
2. Students will be able to identify homonymy.
3. Students will be able to identify jokes (puns) made by taking advantage of homonymy
4. Students will be able to recognize and understand a list of idiomatic expressions.
5. Students will be able to identify jokes made from the idiomatic expressions that are part of their interlanguage.
6. Students will be able to recognize syntactic ambiguity and by doing so have a better command of word roles
7. Students will be able to identify jokes made by taking advantage of syntactic ambiguity.
8. Students will be able to use vocabulary: **ridiculous, ludicrous, outrageous, preposterous, syntactic ambiguity, lexical ambiguity, homonymy, puns**
9. Students will be able to recognize the subject role of 'what' and 'who'.
10. Students will be able to interpret Abbot and Costello's "Who's on First".
11. Students will be able to answer questions about ambiguity from the listening "Hu's the leader of China?"

Materials: Laptop computer capable of hooking to projector and loaded with presentation and Microsoft Power Point; Worksheets 'A' through 'F';

Class Activities:

1. **Introduction (10-15 minutes):** Class will begin with a short talk on what humor is. Teacher should use the slides to explain how humor is ridiculous, ludicrous, outrageous, ad/or preposterous (and define those words as necessary). Teacher will ask students how the words are related, trying to elicit as many responses as possible. Teacher will highlight in particular that all the four vocabulary are adjectives and are all ending in [-ous].
2. **Suffix Activity – Worksheet A (10-15 minutes):** In the next section of class the teacher will introduce the adjectival suffixes: [-ic]; [-ous]; [-al]; and [-ful]. Teacher will demonstrate how though the suffixes can be removed from some words, that not all words ending in the designated suffixes can have them removed, and as such, do not actually have a *suffix*. Teacher will then distribute worksheet A to be completed by students, and will go through the directions with them.

3. **Puns via Lexical Ambiguity – Worksheet B (15-20 minutes):** After students have completed worksheet A teacher will go through the answers with them. The teacher will use the slide with vocabulary from worksheet A to demonstrate the differences between (-ic), (-al), and (-ical), as well as clarify all vocabulary. Then teacher launch into an explanation of homonymy, and how it can be used to make puns and other such jokes. Teacher will go through the two jokes on slide #7 with students to ensure that they understand how homonymy is the root of the pun and that they will be able to complete worksheet B. Next teacher will distribute worksheet B, and go through the directions with students.
4. **Jokes using the possible lexical ambiguity of idioms – Worksheet C (15-20 minutes):** After students have completed worksheet B teacher will go through the answers with them. Then teacher will introduce the idioms on the idiom slide, as well as elicit as many idioms from the students as possible. Following this, the teacher will demonstrate the difference between Literal and Figurative, making clear the nature of idioms, and the possibly humorous interpretation of them. Next the teacher will go through slides #9 and #10 with students, highlighting the humorous nature of the interpretation of both idioms demonstrated by the pictures on the slide. Then teacher will distribute the cut out items from worksheet C, giving some students 1 slip of paper with a ridiculous interpretation + 1 slip of paper with the intended meaning and the other students a slip of paper with the pun itself. Teacher should go over the instructions with students to make sure that they know what they are supposed to do, then leave up the power point slide of the example so students can refer to it as they work.
5. **Jokes taking advantage of syntactical ambiguity – Worksheet D (20-25 minutes):** After students have completed worksheet C teacher will go through the answers with them. Then the teacher will introduce syntactic ambiguity using the provided slide. The teacher will go through the two slides with students that demonstrate the ridiculous and thereby funny interpretations of the syntactically ambiguous sentences. Afterward the teacher should refer to the slide about newspaper headlines and when/why such fragmented sentences are acceptable in English.

Next teacher will distribute the cut out items from worksheet D, giving some students 1 pictorial representation of the ridiculous interpretation + 1 pictorial representation of the intended interpretation and other students a slip of paper with the syntactically ambiguous sentence. (Ideally students who received the 2 interpretations in activity C should receive the syntactically ambiguous sentence in activity D). Teacher should go over the instructions with students to make sure that they know what they are supposed to do, then leave up the power point slide of instructions so that students can refer to it as they work.

6. **Abbot and Costello's "Who's on First?" – Worksheet E (10-15 minutes):** Once students have successfully completed activity D, teacher will get them back into their seats so that they can watch the video for "Who's on First". Before having them watch the video the teacher should refer to the slide regarding who and what, and their ability to take the role of subject. Next teacher will refer to the slide with the baseball diagram, pointing out that the name of the player on first base is who, and that this is somewhat acceptable to English speakers because they inherently understand that "who" can be their subject. Teacher will explain that the cleverest (and thereby funniest) bits of humor are those that are at least somewhat true, or relate to real situations. Next teacher will distribute Worksheet E and play the video for students.
7. **"Hu's the leader of China?" – Worksheet F (10-15):** After students have had an opportunity to discuss "Who's on First" as a class, the teacher should introduce the last activity of the class. The teacher will explain the general context of the "Hu's the leader of China" using the slide with the pictures of the relevant figures referenced in the video. Once students seem ready to watch the video, teacher should distribute worksheet F to the class for students to look over. When students have had a chance to read the sheet and know what to listen for teacher should play the video. The worksheet should be relatively short and simple, and once students are finished, teacher should go over the sheet briefly with the class.
8. **Closing questions and Discussion (5-10 minutes):** Teacher will open up the last five to ten minutes to any lingering questions about the lesson, and/or and concerns about the material that had been covered.